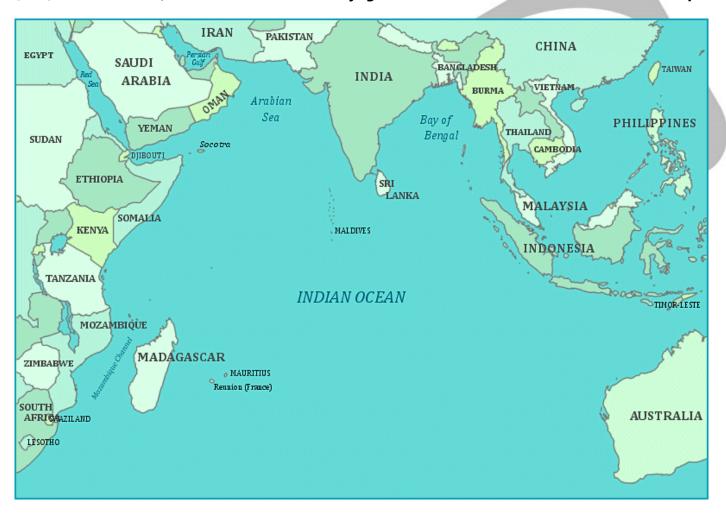


8th Indian Ocean Conference

Source: IE

Why in News?

India's External Affairs minister S Jaishankar represented India in the **8th Indian Ocean Conference** (IOC) held in **Muscat, Oman** with the theme '**Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership'.**



What is the Indian Ocean Conference?

- About: IOC is an annual summit bringing together leaders, policymakers, and experts from the <u>Indian Ocean Region (IOR)</u> to discuss geopolitical, economic, and security challenges.
 - It was established by the India Foundation (India based think tank) in 2016 in Singapore with participation from 30 countries.
- Objective: It aims to unite key states and maritime partners in the IOR to enhance regional cooperation under the vision of <u>Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)</u>.

SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) Vision

Launched in 2015 for regional security, sustainable growth, and cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region

Core Principles

- Trust, respect for maritime norms, regional sensitivity, peaceful dispute resolution,
 & cooperation
- Aligns with India's Act East Policy & Neighbourhood First policy

Significance of IOR for India

- Economic Vitality: 95% of India's trade by volume & 68% of trade by value
- Strategic Leverage: Controls key maritime chokepoints (e.g. Strait of Malacca), boosting trade security
- Defense Shield: Enhances naval security against piracy & threats
- Regional Influence: Strengthens India's role in South Asia and Indo-Pacific

Major Initiatives of India Aligning with the SAGAR Vision



Coastal radar systems in Indian Ocean countries (e.g., Maldives)

Maritime Exercises

With Sri Lanka, Maldives, Seychelles, Singapore etc

Naval Partnerships

With Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius, & Seychelles

 Shared Vision of India-Indonesia
 Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific

Collaborative Mechanisms

Through platforms like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) & Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)



Port & Infrastructure Projects

Coastal radar systems in Indian Ocean countries (e.g., Maldives)

Project 'Mausam'

Explores how monsoon winds influenced Indian Ocean interactions, spreading knowledge, traditions, technologies, & ideas along maritime routes



Tracks maritime traffic & threats, shares real-time information

Disaster Response and Humanitarian Aid

Mission Sagar (2020): COVID-19 assistance to Indian Ocean littoral states, including Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros, & Seychelles

Operation Neer: India supplied drinking water to Maldives

MV Wakashio Oil Spill (2020): Supplied 30 tons of technical equipment to Mauritius

MT New Diamond Fire Incident (2020): Indian Coast Guard aided Sri Lanka in firefighting



What is the Indian Ocean Region?

- About: IOR refers to the region around the Indian Ocean, including the countries that border it.
 - It spans from the <u>Strait of Malacca</u> and western Australia in the east to the <u>Mozambique Channel</u> in the west.
 - It covers about 20% of the world's water surface, a quarter of the world's landmass, and three-quarters of global oil reserves.
- Strategic Importance:
 - Economic Significance: Approximately 80% of global maritime oil and 80% of India's oil imports pass through the Indian Ocean annually.
 - Key Choke Points:
 - **Strait of Malacca** (connects Southeast Asia and the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean).
 - **Strait of Hormuz** (connects the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean; crucial for global oil transport).
 - Bab-el-Mandeb Strait (connects the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, impacting trade with Africa and the Middle East).
 - **Mozambique Channel** (important for goods transiting from the Cape of Good Hope to the Middle East and Asia).
 - Military Significance: It is home to key naval bases and faces maritime security concerns like piracy, illegal fishing, and territorial dispute.
 - Critical Minerals: The <u>Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB)</u> is estimated to hold vast reserves of nickel, copper, cobalt, and manganese.

Click Here to Read: What are the Major Challenges Related to the Indian Ocean Region?, How to Deal with Challenges in the Indian Ocean Region?

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

- Q. Consider the following in respect of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS): (2017)
 - 1. Inaugural IONS was held in India in 2015 under the chairmanship of the Indian Navy.
 - 2. IONS is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (b)

Q. With reference to 'Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)', consider the following statements: (2015)

- It was established very recently in response to incidents of piracy and accidents of oil spills.
 It is an alliance meant for maritime security only.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (d)

